

Message Text

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PAGE 01 DAMASC 07683 150734Z

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 IO-13 OMB-01 TRSE-00 ACDA-12 EB-08 AID-05
SSM-03 MCT-01 HA-05 /117 W
-----051161 160519Z /17

R 150652Z DEC 77

FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6003

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

USINT BAGHDAD

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

SECDEF WASHDC

DIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L DAMASCUS 7683

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PINT, PGOV, SY, PLO, EG, IZ

SUBJECT: PLO LEADER CLAIMS NEW SOVIET COMMITMENT TO SYRIAN AIR
DEFENSE

1. LOCAL BUSINESSMAN, WHO BROTHER-IN-LAW OF PALESTINIAN LEADER,
HANI AL-HASAN, TOLD POLOFF HASAN HAD INFORMED HIM THAT DURING
KHADDAM'S RECENT TRIP TO MOSCOW SOVIETS "GUARANTEED" THEY WOULD
PROVIDE AIR DEFENSE SUFFICIENT TO PROTECT ALL OF SYRIA. HASAN
DID NOT ELABORATE ON SPECIFIC MEASURES THE SOVIETS WERE
PREPARED TO TAKE BEYOND PROVIDING ADDITIONAL AIR DEFENSE EQUIPMENT.

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2. BUSINESSMAN ALSO CLAIMED THAT HE HAD HEARD FROM "MODERATES IN
THE PLO" (PROBABLY HASAN OR SOMEBODY CLOSE TO HIM) THAT IRAQIS
ARE MOUNTING TERRORIST OPERATIONS AIMED AT BOTH SADAT AND ASSAD
REGIMES. HIS SOURCES TOLD HIM THAT THE MURDER OF DAVID
HOLDEN WAS IN ALL LIKELIHOOD A CASE OF MISTAKEN IDENTITY SINCE
THE IRAQIS HAVE GIVEN ORDERS TO TRY TO EMBARRASS THE EGYPTIANS
BY KILLING ANY ISRAELIS THEY CAN FIND IN CAIRO. SOURCES ALSO

TOLD HIM THAT ASSAD REGIME HAD BEEN ALERTED BY PLO THAT IRAQIS WILL TRY TO KILL A PROMINENT ALAWITE RELIGIOUS LEADER, PERHAPS ASSOCIATED WITH THE ALAWITE HIGHER COUNCIL.

3. PLO BELIEVES BEGIN'S RECENT ILLNESS IN LONDON WAS "DIPLOMATIC" SERVING AS A COVER FOR HIM TO MEET PIERRE GEMYEL WHO HAD REPORTEDLY FLOWN TO BRUSSELS THE DAY BEFORE. PIERRE'S SON, AMINE, SAID BY SOURCES TO BE CURRENTLY IN ISRAEL.

4. COMMENT: THIS REPORT IS FURTHER INDICATION THAT KHADDAM RECEIVED PROMISES OF ADDITIONAL MILITARY EQUIPMENT DURING HIS RECENT VISIT TO MOSCOW.
MURPHY

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NNN

Message Attributes

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